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SECRET

American Embassy,
Paris, France,
January 6, 1959.

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Dear Livie:

Sir Frank Roberts called on General Norstad yesterday and inter alia referred to recent discussions between you and Hood on Berlin contingency planning with particular regard to Paragraph D. Our visitor read out some of the points contained in the U.K. instructions to Caccia which I shall not repeat here since they obviously have already come to your attention. Though Frank was quite emphatic in his references to British solidarity with us on the Berlin issue, it seemed clear that his principals are shying away from the Paragraph D approach and would like to have a try instead for a limited airlift.

Norstad refrained from engaging in substantive comment on the specific point involved. He did say that in principle he believed in a very firm approach on the retention of our rights in and about Berlin, but that at the same time we should in sober contemplation of the full implications of a showdown with Khrushchev, not fail to give equal attention to providing some kind of an acceptable escape hatch for the latter. The conversation on this subject ended on the note that the Mikoyan visit might provide a better glimpse of possibilities than we now have.

I report the foregoing not so much because it will add significantly to your appreciation of the problems that lie ahead with respect to Berlin and the Soviets, but rather as an example of the kind of discussions we get involved in around here and accordingly to express the hope that, within the limits of discretion, the Department will keep us briefed on important bilateral and tripartite discussions that take place in Washington regarding tactical

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(1)
The Honorable
Livingston T. Merchant,
Assistant Secretary of State
for European Affairs,
Department of State,
Washington, D. C.

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and policy aspects of the Berlin situation. As CINCEUR, General Norstad has, of course, a direct interest on the military side, but, as you know, it is sometimes hard to make a clean line between the military and political spheres in these matters. I shall therefore be most appreciative of being cut in as much as possible on the developing Berlin situation.

Sincerely,



Ray L. Thurston
Counselor of Embassy

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